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ABSTRACT

Aimed at all those involved in the supply of training and vocational education for the hospitality industry, this report summarizes findings of the research report, "Training Who Needs It?" It draws out and explores in more detail key issues relating to the provision of training, support, and related initiatives for the industry. Section 1 provides a summary of the level of training activity and the extent to which training initiatives are known and used. Section 2 explores the industry's training need. It looks at recruitment difficulties, skill shortages, and constraints on training activity. Section 3 presents a summary of the industry's awareness of training and related initiatives--particularly those which are supported by the government. It covers Investors in People, National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications, and government training schemes. Section 4 explores the provision of training to the catering and hospitality industry and licensed retailing sector. It gives an overview of each type of training provider--colleges of further and higher education, publicly funded training providers, and private training companies/consultancies--and then examines the main supply-side issues affecting their training provision to the industry. Section 5 identifies gaps in training provision with industry demand and provides a summary of action points for providers to operate more efficiently in the future to meet a real industry need. (YLB)

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Providers Report

HOTEL & CATERING TRAINING COMPANY

November 1995

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Contents

Acknowledgements	5
Introduction	7
Summary of Training Activity	9
Summary of Training Need - Demand for Training	13
Awareness of Government Initiatives	19
The Current Supply of Training	23
Identifying & Bridging the Gaps	33
Summary of Action for Training Providers	36

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Introduction

Previous research has shown that levels of training in the catering and hospitality industry are below those of other industries. Similarly, qualification levels in catering and hospitality are lower than in most other industries and below those of many European partners. Most training in the catering and hospitality industry that does occur tends to be on the job and does not lead to qualifications. Evidence shows that the catering and hospitality industry and licensed retailing sector is beginning to face a shortfall of skilled personnel and therefore it is vital to ensure that the industry can access relevant training programmes and support so that it attracts and maintains an adequately skilled workforce and enhances the skills of those already working in it.

This report is aimed at all those involved in the supply of training and vocational education for the hospitality industry. It summarises the findings of the Research Report "Training Who Needs It?" and draws out and explores in more detail key issues relating to the provision of training, support and related initiatives for the industry. It should be read in conjunction with the main report.

1. Training Who Needs It?, Hotel & Catering Training Company, 1995

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The overall objective of this report is to fuel training providers, and others involved with the supply of training to the industry, with the facts about the current provision and how it meets (or otherwise) industry needs, in order to stimulate action. To this end it:

- summarises current training activity and the future needs of the hospitality industry;
- summarises current training provision and suppliers' plans for the future;
- discusses issues affecting future supply and demand for training;
- compares future training needs with likely provision and identifies gaps;
- makes recommendations for future training provision in order to fill these gaps and encourage a higher take up of training in the industry.

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Summary of training activity

The Catering and Hospitality Industry and Licensed Retailing Sector is one of the largest employers in the UK - representing nearly 10% of the workforce. It offers tremendous career opportunities and is forecast to continue to grow until beyond 2004. It is an industry that demands high levels of skills, professionalism and customer care. Yet it remains one of the most underqualified industries and displays one of the lowest levels of training activity in the UK economy. It is, however, well recognised that in order to continue to grow and for businesses to compete effectively, there needs to be continual effort invested in increasing industry standards. One important way of contributing to this process is by investment in well planned, well delivered and properly evaluated training programmes.

The picture is not all gloomy, a number of notable organisations within the industry have developed well established, high quality programmes of training and have implemented vocational qualifications.

These are the Champions this industry should be proud of. They are evidence that investing in training pays dividends. The fact remains, however, that many employers have not taken responsibility for training their staff properly.

This section summarises the level of Training Activity in the industry and the extent to which training initiatives are known and used.

Summary of training activity

Training Activity

The research found that some 57% of employers had delivered training other than induction in the previous 12 months.

Over 40% of employers said that they had not provided any training for staff other than induction in the past year. It was apparent that not all of these employers were completely averse to training, as just under a half had trained in the past and 42% expected to train in the future, but they did not see the benefits of continuous development of staff. Particular barriers to training identified were:

- employers believed staff were adequately skilled to do the job;
- training only seen as a one-off measure to tackle particular problems;
- lack of resources, including money and time to train staff;
- lack of appropriate training to meet business needs;
- lack of information on the sources of training.

Such training activity as there was, was largely undertaken to meet perceived statutory or inspection requirements (i.e., food hygiene, health and safety, fire safety, etc.), with employers generally reluctant to take responsibility for general staff development through training. Training activity was highest in the catering services sectors (i.e., catering in education, hospitals, industry, etc.). Activity was lowest in the commercial sectors (particularly restaurants, pubs and clubs) and in the smaller establishments.

Staff in lower occupational levels were least likely to have received training in their current job, as were part-time and casual staff, despite representing the majority of staff who were frequently involved in customer contact. Part-time staff were also often the longest serving employees.

Contract Caterers and in-house caterers, were most likely to provide training for all their staff.

The vast majority of employers providing training (84%) said they had identified tangible business benefits from training, including increased quality and profits (40%), improved staff commitment (34%) and increased customer satisfaction (32%).

Formal training plans and budgets were most prevalent in larger organisations and in establishments in the catering services sector. It was apparent that they would only be effective if combined with other good practice in training provision, best identified by the Investors in People (IiP) initiative.

Most employers who provided training, also paid for it.

Although 62% of employers providing training used external trainers, these were most commonly environmental health officers (EHOs - reflecting the high levels of food hygiene training) and equipment suppliers. In practice, however, training providers were only used by a minority of employers, with only 27% of all industry employers using EHOs and 23% using training companies.

In-house on-the-job training was widely used in the industry. It was apparent, however, that in many cases staff received little training and were all too frequently left to learn the job as they went along with no real training development or guidance to assist them.

16

Off-the-job training involved considerable use of interactive learning styles, reflecting the practical and communicative nature of the work, but few employers took advantage or were aware of the external provision available.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of training, when undertaken, was most often informal. Proper evaluation was recognised as being extremely important and, to those who carried it out effectively, an essential part of maximising benefits from training for the business.

There is still a lack of awareness of National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQs/SVQs) in much of the industry outside Youth Training (YT) and Training for Work (TfW) schemes. There is a continuing need to highlight the benefits of NVQs/SVQs to ***all*** businesses. The lead body, through its Implementation Action Plans, have identified a number of factors responsible for the low take up of NVQ/SVQs in catering and hospitality. Namely:

- the high number of small businesses in the industry who find it difficult to set up the infrastructure required;
- the long period of time necessary to get ready for NVQ/SVQ implementation;
- the assessment infrastructure required seeming an additional burden to an already stressful workload;
- a lack of perceived tangible business benefits flowing from implementation.

The Plans also put forward action points to address them. However, more needs to be done. There needs to be much more commitment and support from key players in industry.

- Awareness of Investors in People (IiP) amongst industry employers was very low (26%), and take-up even lower, less than 3%.
- Although over a half of employers were aware of Training & Enterprise Councils/Local Enterprise Companies (TECs/LECs), only 18% were aware of the services they provide. A number of employers were involved in placing YT and TfW trainees, but there appeared to be a lack of understanding of the assistance available from TECs/LECs to help implement IiP and NVQs/SVQs.

Summary of training need

This section explores the industry's training need. It looks at recruitment difficulties, skill shortages, and constraints on training activity particularly among those organisations who were not training active.

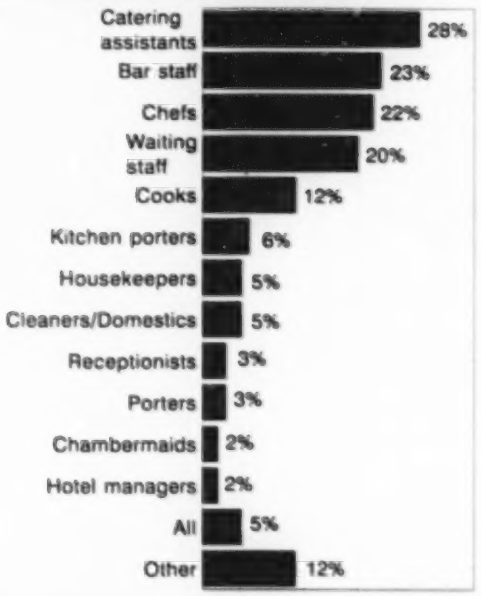
Recruitment Difficulties

In recent years, the catering and hospitality industry has consistently registered high levels of hard-to-fill vacancies. Indeed catering occupations have been the occupational group for which most hard-to-fill vacancies have existed.

Nearly half of employers (44%) surveyed had experienced difficulties in recruiting staff. Establishments employing over 25 staff were twice as likely to face difficulties as those with under 10 staff. Specific problem areas were the recruitment of chefs, cooks, catering assistants and supervisors, bar staff and waiting staff (See Figure 1). The main reasons given for these difficulties were skill shortages, shift work, poor pay and a general lack of interest in the work (See Figure 2). Smaller establishments particularly identified problems associated with a lack of interest in their work.

Figure 1

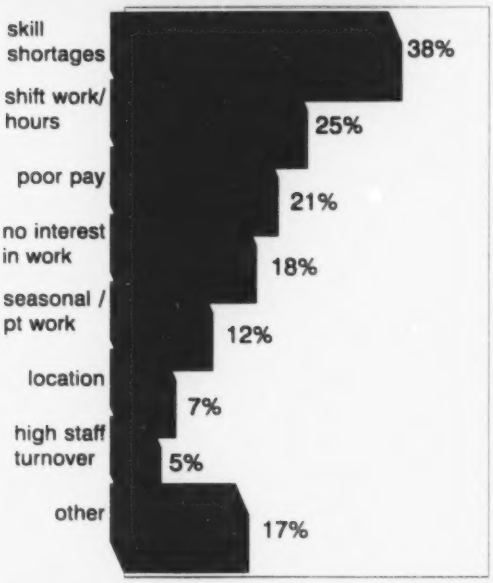
Occupations difficult to recruit



Base: Employers who reported recruitment difficulties (175)

Figure 2

Reasons for difficulties in recruitment



Base: Employers who reported recruitment difficulties (175)

Skill deficiencies of existing staff

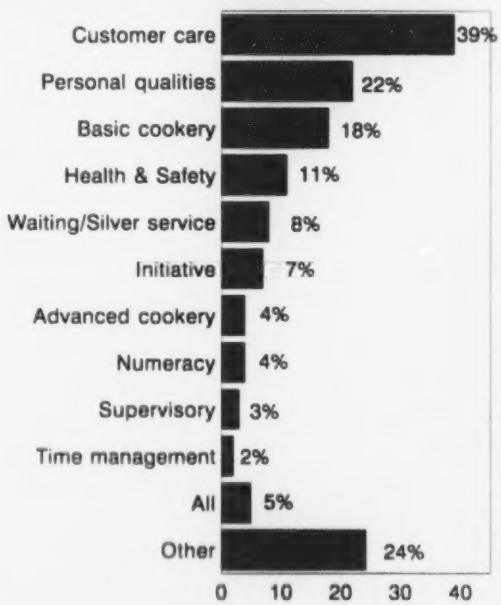
Three-quarters of employers felt that their existing staff had adequate skills, but there was a pronounced difference by size of establishment; 83% of small establishments felt that all staff were adequately skilled compared to 59% of larger establishments. The vast majority of employees themselves (90%) felt that they had the necessary skills to do their job.

As Figure 3 shows, the main skills that employers felt were lacking in staff were customer care, basic cookery skills and personal qualities (such as a happy disposition/outgoing personality). Customer care skills were particularly of concern in clubs, restaurants and hospitals; basic cookery was perceived as a problem more frequently by contract caterers and personal qualities by pubs and establishments not generally providing training. A number of managers also reported skill shortage problems in supervisory positions - managers were aware of the dangers of promoting above competence and several had identified skill needs among supervisors. Training providers felt that there were skill shortages in sales and customer service, and in training specifically for middle managers.

Almost half of employees, and particularly those aged under 50 years and working full time, believed that they could enhance their existing skills by training. The skills which employees felt could most usefully be enhanced were kitchen, bar and managerial skills. This tallies with information from the Department for Education and Employment NOMIS series of vacancy data. Occupations such as hotel and restaurant managers, publicans, catering supervisors, chefs/cooks

Figure 3

Skills lacking in existing staff



Base: Employers who thought existing staff were not adequately skilled (140)

and housekeepers have consistently registered high levels of skill shortages (even at the height of the recession).

Awareness of the possible beneficial impact of further training on skills was directly related to occupational level: two-thirds of senior managers thought training could lead to skill enhancement compared to just one-third of operative staff. In addition, those employees who considered their work to be a career were more likely to think trainingwould improve skills than those who saw it as a job (70% compared with 40%). The highest proportion of employees who thought their existing skills could be enhanced were employed in hotels (65%), with the lowest proportions working in hospitals (40%) and fast food restaurants (42%).

Constraints on training activity

Some 43% of employers had not provided any training for staff (other than induction) in the 12 months prior to being surveyed. However, a third of those employers who had not provided training in the past year had provided training in previous years.

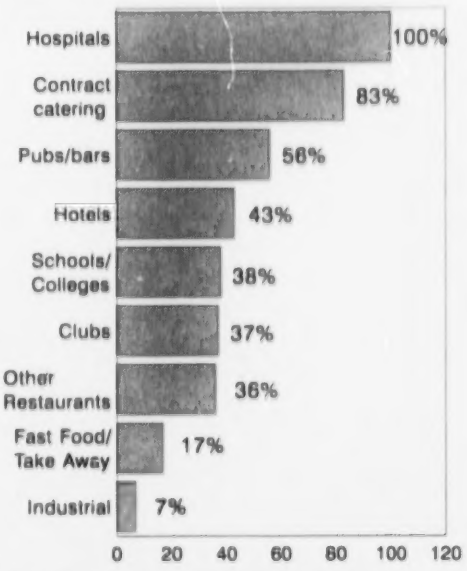
Only 28% of small establishments not currently training had provided training in the past; but 76% of large establishments had done so.

The main reason given by employers for the lack of training provision was that employed staff already had adequate skills to do their job - induction training provided all the requisite skills - and so further training was not required. However, these employers were least likely to audit skill needs or formally ask employees about their own requirements. This reflected the findings of previous HCTC research[2], where a greater level of commitment to training co-existed with the greatest awareness of the need for further training.

Nearly half (42%) of employers not currently training staff said that they would provide training in the future. There was a marked difference by size of establishment, with 39% of small establishments responding positively compared to 68% of large establishments. All hospitals and 83% of contract caterers intended to train in the future (See Figure 4), but only 17% of fast food restaurants and 7% of industrial catering units had any intention of doing so. Major influences on future training provision were expected to be company

Figure 4

Employers who intend to provide training in future by sector



Base: Employers not providing training (242)

2. Meeting Competence Needs in the hotel & catering industry, HCTC 1992

expansion and more resources (for medium and small establishments) and the availability of relevant training programmes (for large establishments). Some employers were unaware of any relevant programmes being available to them (See Figure 5).

This suggests that some employers do not see training as a development process but as 'one-off fixes' to learn specific skills or deal with particular problems while others were simply unaware of what was available.

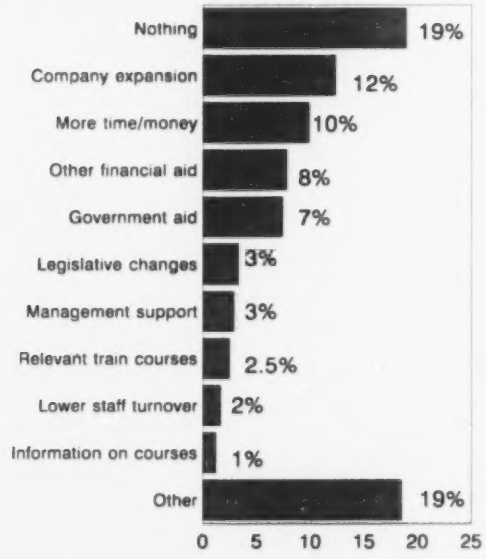
Over three-quarters of all employees thought training was very important for their future, but there were significant differences by occupational level: over 80% of senior managers believed it to be important, compared with 55% of operative employees.

Specific types of training which employees suggested that they would like to receive were management training (21% of respondents) and computer training (10% of respondents). 12% of respondents felt that they did not need any further training for their development and 11% of respondents felt that any training would be useful (Figure 6).

The most common reason identified by employees for not having received training was that there was no need for it. Catering assistants in one hospital thought that they were already quite capable of doing their job because it was an expansion of their household duties and training was 'taking it too far'. This view can be contrasted with a case study of a hospital where NVQs had recently been implemented. Staff viewed

Figure 5

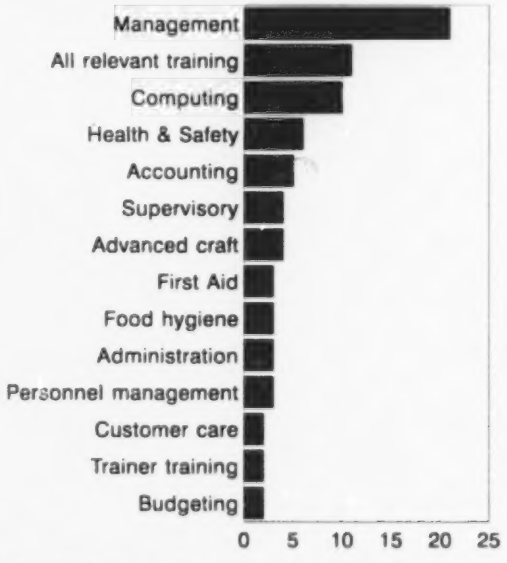
Factors that would encourage employers to train in the future



Base: Employers not providing training (242)

Figure 6

Training wanted by employees for their future development



Base: Employees who wanted more training (673)

NVQs as a means of personal development and gaining a sense of achievement. One candidate noted, *'[The NVQ] is something that I have achieved and it might help me in the future'.*

Managers often cited time as a factor which limited training provision. The pressures of many businesses were such that it was difficult to set time aside for training. Planned training often had to be postponed or even conducted in the employees' own time. For example, it was common for staff to attend college courses on their days off.

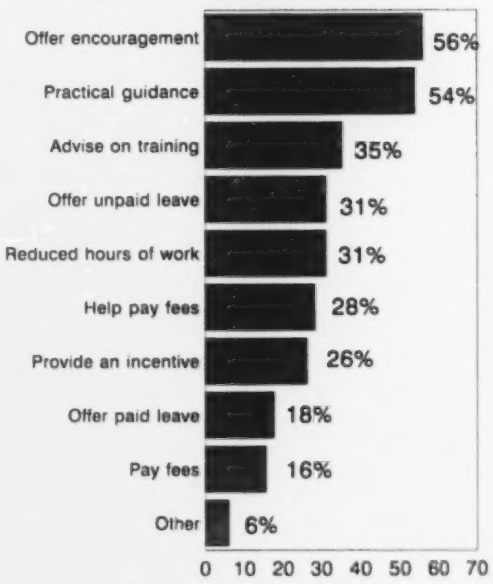
The case studies illustrated that training programmes were often inflexible and not sensitive to the needs of small businesses. It would be more convenient for staff to be trained over a series of mornings before opening, rather than taking up one or more whole days.

Cost was another important factor, particularly for small establishments with no head office support. A number of managers stated that they could afford course fees but not the additional expenses incurred in covering the employee's position while training. The smallest establishments tended to think that most problems were connected with staff coverage when an employee was receiving off-job training. The vast majority of employers not providing training were prepared to offer some help towards accessing training for their employees.

For example, 56% were prepared to offer encouragement, with a further 54% willing to give practical guidance. Needless to say, any help which had cost implications was significantly less popular, with only 16% of employers willing to pay programme fees; 27% willing to help pay fees and 29% prepared to reduce staff hours of work (See Figure 7). Financial aid was far more likely to be forthcoming from larger employers.

Figure 7

Types of assistance employers are prepared to offer to employees to train



Base: Employers not providing training (242)

Awareness of Government initiatives

This section summarises the industry's awareness of training and related initiatives - particularly those which are supported by government. It covers Investors in People, NVQs/SVQs and government training schemes.

Investors in People

Only 11% of those not providing training had heard of Investors In People, compared with 38% of training active employers and 26% of the sample as a whole.

Awareness was much higher among larger than smaller employers, with 51% of large establishments, 41% of medium establishments and 21% of small establishments aware of the initiative. Almost two-thirds (63%) of contract caterers and 55% of hospitals had heard of Investors in People, while at the other extreme, only 20% of pubs and clubs and 8% of restaurants had done so. Of employers aware of Investors in People, 11% (or 15 establishments) already had certification and 19% (25 establishments) were working towards it. A further 27% (38 establishments) were considering certification.

Summary of Awareness of training related initiatives

NVQs/SVQs

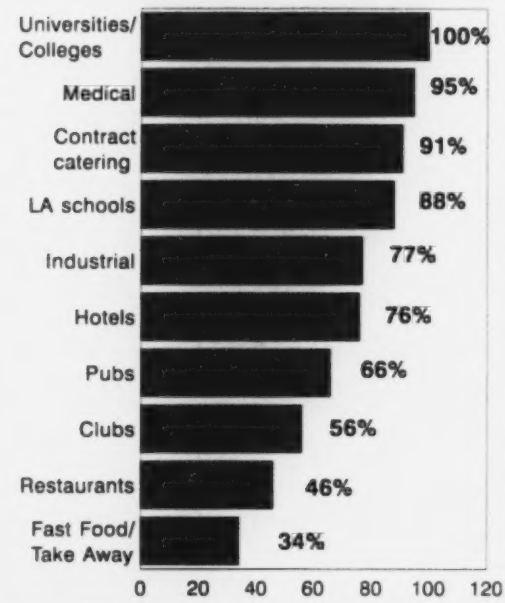
While the majority of all employers surveyed (69%) were aware of NVQs/SVQs, there were variations according to size. Of the small employers, 59% had heard of NVQs/SVQs compared with 76% of medium-sized employers and 91% of large employers.

By sector, there was a higher awareness in the catering services than commercial sectors (See Figure 8), with lowest awareness in traditional restaurants (46%) and fast food (34%). Only 14% of small fast-food outlets and 43% of small restaurants were aware of NVQs/SVQs.

The trade press, company information, industry contacts and colleges were most frequently mentioned as sources of NVQ/SVQ information.

Figure 8

NVQ/SVQ awareness by sector



Base: All employers (562)

* Excludes Local Authority School Meals totalling less than a quarter

Of employers providing training, 26% (82 employers) had staff working towards the qualifications and 15% (48 employers) were planning to introduce NVQs/SVQs in the future. Few establishments in the commercial sectors were planning to introduce NVQs/SVQs but hotels, pubs and clubs were most likely to. There were a number of size-related variations, with 19% of all large employers surveyed planning to introduce NVQs/SVQs as opposed to 10% of medium employers and just 9% of small employers.

A number of managers commented that the opportunity to obtain a qualification raised staff morale as employees believed that their company was committed to their development. This was true across the board for both small and large businesses.

Almost half of employees surveyed had heard of NVQs/SVQs; with the highest levels of awareness among males, younger members of staff and full-time employees. There was a positive relationship with occupational level - 71% of management had heard of the qualifications, compared with 62% of supervisory and advanced craft employees, 51% of craft employees and 43% of operative employees. Linked with this, employees who considered themselves to have a career had a greater knowledge of NVQ/SVQs than those with a 'job' (70% and 44% respectively).

Of all employees responding to the survey, 68 (or 5% of the sample) had obtained an NVQ/SVQ, with a further 88 working towards one. Of those employees who had either achieved or were working towards an NVQ/SVQ, the vast majority were doing food preparation and cooking or food and drink

service qualifications (reflecting also the make up of the sample with the majority of respondents working in those areas).

Of those employees who were aware of NVQ/SVQs and not already involved, around half indicated some interest in working towards one. Similar levels of interest were exhibited in all occupational levels up to middle management, by full and part-time workers and by males and females. However, interest was lowest among those aged over 50 years and those working in housekeeping. Reasons given for not wanting to become involved included age, lack of time and having equivalent qualifications already.

Involvement in government training schemes

Over half (54%) of employers surveyed were aware of TECs/LECs, but only 18% were aware of the services they provided. Only 1% of respondents said that they used TECs/LECs to access staff via government training schemes and a further 1% said that they used TECs/LECs to access general training. None the less, 10% of establishments had taken on at least one Training for Work trainee in the past 12 months and 13% had taken on at least one Youth Trainee. Large establishments were more likely to take on these trainees than smaller establishments. A higher proportion of contract caterers, industrial caterers and hotels took on Youth Training and Training for Work trainees than other sectors.

The main motives for taking on such trainees were to 'give them a chance' (32% of respondent employers) and to provide them with industry experience (22% of employers). A further 12% of employers took on trainees to provide the industry with long term benefits. This option applied much more to large than small employers.

The current supply of training

In this section, the provision of training to the catering and hospitality industry and licensed retailing sector is explored. For the purpose of the study, suppliers of training were grouped into three distinct categories: colleges of further and higher education; publicly funded training providers; and private training companies / consultancies. This section gives an overview of each type of training provider and then examines the main supply-side issues affecting their training provision to the industry.

Further and Higher Education

Over 300 colleges and universities throughout the UK offer programmes leading to qualifications in hospitality, catering and related subjects. A wide variety of programmes ranging from degrees and HNDs in hospitality, catering and tourism management, to the full range of GNVQs/ GSVQs and NVQs/SVQs for the hospitality industry are offered.

The further education sector has seen a radical shake-up in terms of programme provision with the introduction of NVQs/ SVQs replacing many of the traditional craft based programmes, such as City and Guilds 706-1 and 706-2; and a move towards on-job assessment rather than examinations. The widespread introduction of Realistic Work Environments (RWEs) has enabled many colleges to fully embrace the NVQ/SVQ system. Many further education colleges now offer places to trainees on the Youth Training scheme. In general, four days a week are spent on work placement and one day in college studying for an NVQ/SVQ.

Table 1 shows the estimated total provision of catering and hospitality places and the total applications for places for the academic year 1994/95. Higher Education courses have generally attracted many more applicants than places in recent years.

The current supply of training

Table 1

Applications made and places available 1994/95 College-based catering and hospitality courses

	Applications	%	Places	%	Applicants to places
Degree	15249	58.0	3136	25.4	4.9
HND	3040	11.6	1506	12.2	2.0
BTEC	3419	13.0	1921	15.6	1.8
GNVQ Level 3	2356	9.0	2288	18.5	1.0
GNVQ Level 2	2217	8.4	3487	28.3	0.6
Total non-NVQ	26281	100.0	12338	100.0	2.1
NVQ/SVQ - Level 1					
Food Preparation & Cooking	2553	61.1	2360	56.1	1.1
Food & Drink Service	1255	30.0	1338	31.8	0.9
Housekeeping	171	4.1	332	7.9	0.5
Reception & Portering	202	4.8	174	4.1	1.2
Guest Service	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Total Level 1	4180 23%	100.0	4204 19%	100.0	1.0
NVQ/SVQ - Level 2					
Food Preparation & Cooking	6128	53.8	6379	54.9	1.0
Food & Drink Service	4496	39.5	4448	38.3	1.0
Reception	588	5.2	593	5.1	1.0
General	179	1.6	204	1.8	0.9
Total Level 2	11391 63%	100.0	11623 51%	100.0	1.0
NVQ/SVQ - Level 3					
Food Preparation & Cooking	1080	41.8	2891	42.7	0.4
Food & Drink Service	308	11.9	2927	43.2	0.1
Reception	18	0.7	15	0.2	1.2
Housekeeping	12	0.5	14	0.2	0.9
Kitchen & Larder	544	21.1	455	6.7	1.2
Patisserie/Confectionery	553	21.4	425	6.3	1.3
On-Licensed Premises	70	2.7	47	0.7	1.5
Supervisory Management					
Total Level 3	2585 14%	100.0	6774 30%	100.0	0.4
NVQ/SVQ - Level 4					
Food Preparation & Cooking	4	27.2	4	48.0	1.0
Food & Drink Service	9	57.8	2	25.5	4.0
Reception	2	15.0	2	26.5	1.0
Housekeeping	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
On-Licensed Premises	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Supervisory Management					
Total Level 4	16 0.9%	100.0	9 0.4%	100.0	1.8
Total Levels 1-4	18172		22610		0.8
OTHER	3538		3401		1.0
Total	47991		38349		1.3

Applications for degree courses are, however, governed by the Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) which permits each applicant to apply for up to eight places. In addition, numbers of students allowed on these programmes are now being capped, and colleges fined should their student intake be too great.

Conversely, many further education programmes have been undersubscribed. Applications at NVQ/SVQ levels one and two matched available places but at higher levels there was a mixed picture. The applications for advanced craft and the on-licensed premises programme exceeded places available, but all the other Supervisory level/ NVQs/SVQs were undersubscribed (especially housekeeping where the numbers were minute).

Over two-thirds of colleges (68%) reported that they had problems attracting sufficient numbers of students, while 21% reported that courses were oversubscribed. The main reasons cited for problems in attracting students were competition from other providers (mentioned by 17%), lack of interest in the catering and hospitality industry (17%) and a lack of financial assistance for students (13%).

Table 2 shows that demand from students was the main influence on colleges' provision of programmes (mentioned by 52% of colleges), followed by funding (33% of colleges). The key influence on future provision however, was clearly funding and costs (mentioned by 54%), followed by student demand for places (37%). This illustrates the economics of education now in play: colleges are now driven increasingly by funding issues. Consideration of the needs of the industry was a poor third in the factors most influential in affecting current and future provision.

In terms of industry demand for appropriately skilled individuals, this signifies an unfortunate situation: industry needs ought to be the major influence on college provision since colleges primary aim is to help provide a suitable skills supply for the industry. In reality, colleges are being constrained by available funding and, therefore, are not taking the needs of industry fully into account.

Table 2

Factors determining provision of courses

	Current	Future
Sample	161	161
Demand for courses	52%	37%
Cost of courses/funding	33%	54%
Needs of industry	14%	12%
Facilities available	13%	12%
Physical and human resources	12%	5%
Quality of provision	8%	8%
Employment opportunities	6%	3%
Quality of students from colleges	2%	4%
NVQ Standards	-	6%
Government policy	2%	2%
Provision of RWEs	2%	2%
Employers' support	2%	2%
Image of the industry	1%	5%
Demography changes	2%	-

Training Providers involved in publicly funded training schemes

Youth Training and Training for Work Schemes are administered by Training and Enterprise companies (TECs) and Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) on a local basis. TECs/LECs receive their funding from central government. Local training providers or employers themselves, contract with the TECs/LECs to provide training and industry placements for trainees on these

schemes. All Youth Training and Training for Work trainees must work towards an NVQ/SVQ, usually at level 2, though traineeships are also offered at levels 1 and 3 in some areas.

Funding

A large proportion of training providers are completely reliant on their TEC/LEC for funding purposes, and are concerned that money devoted to training schemes seems to fall in real terms each year. Many training providers interviewed commented that their training programmes would not stand up in their own right without a surplus from previous years or additional funding from other sources.

TECs/LECs offer output-related funding, requiring the achievement of a 'successful outcome' (a qualification, or a job), before the training provider receives a proportion or the entire amount of funding for the training services provided. The reasoning behind this approach (and working towards 100% output related funding) was to ensure training providers were providing value for money. Training providers, however, reported that in some areas the scheme endangered their viability in that they may place considerable resources up-front into training and placing trainees, only to find at the end of the day, through no fault of their own, that the trainees fail to achieve either a job or a qualification and the provider therefore forfeits the full payment.

From April 1995, TEC funding arrangements were generally moving towards a system of *Starts and Outcomes*. Under this system, a start payment is given for each trainee starting a scheme and then further payments made on completion of the agreed outcome (e.g., achievement of an NVQ/SVQ level 2 or paid employment).

TEC/LECs cited the main advantages of *Starts and Outcomes* as increased levels of NVQ/SVQ achievement; higher levels of employed status individuals; faster achievement of the qualification; and a reduction in the amount of administration to be completed. For trainees, it was believed that this would lead to a better focus, providing greater encouragement to achieve their set outcome.

Training providers, however, foresaw a number of problems. Primarily, these were in terms of their own cash flow, and perhaps more importantly, an increasing pressure to rush people through their qualification and into a job in as short a time as possible, which in their view was to the benefit of neither the trainee nor the industry. One training provider commented that the emphasis was changing from actual *training for work* to getting people into jobs as fast as possible, irrespective of whether they were trained properly or not. This provided a disincentive against offering quality training (which takes time and effort) because more money was available for the job outcome. One training provider stated that an easier way to survive would be by operating more like a job agency than a quality trainer. There was also a concern that there would now be an incentive to discriminate between trainees, focusing on those who were more likely to get a job, rather than a full consideration of the total guarantee group, thus making a mockery of equal opportunities policies.

Training providers believed that within the catering and hospitality industry the use of NVQs at level 2 would not have taken off had there not been a link with the Training for Work and Youth Training schemes. However, many training providers have now concluded that Training for Work is a weak vehicle for NVQ/SVQ delivery.

Some providers also felt pressurised to rush Youth Training candidates into achievement in a set number of weeks, irrespective of the notion that NVQs/SVQs were never meant to be time-serving.

Funding from TECs/LECs for government initiatives will, in the future, be accessed through *Training Credits*. This system enables 16 and 17 year olds to purchase, in effect, their own training. Young people will be given credits which they can use to access training for periods of up to two years. Hence, young people will be able to obtain training via such schemes as Modern Apprenticeships or Youth Training geared towards the attainment of NVQs/SVQs. The type of programme demanded determines its price and incentives will be given to provision in a skill shortage areas, to small employers and to those who employ special needs trainees.

Training providers interviewed were not expecting the introduction of training credits to have much effect on the total volume of training provided, but to have a notable effect in terms of changes to administration. Research on the piloting of Training Credits showed that most initial problems with the system were connected to the information technology used and funding[3].

NVQs/SVQs

The NVQ/SVQ system has the full support of the present government, the opposition, the CBI and the Trade Union movement. These qualifications are set to play an increasingly important role in the hospitality industry in the future .

All trainers involved with NVQs/SVQs spoke positively about the effect that they had on trainees. Training for Work and Youth Training candidates were, on start-up, drawn from what can generally be categorised as low achievers. NVQs/SVQs provided both a stimulus for achievement and evidence of competence in the job that they did. Achieving a qualification was seen as extremely important to trainees not only in terms of job opportunities but also as a means of boosting their confidence.

Many of the training providers interviewed praised NVQs/SVQs for their applicability to special needs staff, who often did not perform well on paper but were still capable of applying themselves practically. A remaining problem, however, particularly in terms of funding, was that special needs candidates might be incapable of achieving a complete qualification. Recording evidence and diary work was a particular struggle for some special needs candidates. Some recognition, in funding terms, ought to be made for the achievement of part-qualifications in the case of special needs.

Many trainers mentioned that NVQs/SVQs were bureaucratic with complicated paperwork and language. The attainment of the TDLB units also proved to be the major problem for many trainers.

At the beginning of 1995, the industry lead body published revised occupational standards of NVQs/SVQs at levels 1 and 2 and the advanced craft qualifications at level 3. In general the revisions have been welcomed as being much more relevant to the industry.

3. Evaluation of the Second Year of Training Credits, NFER, 1993.

Broad changes to the standards included the rewriting of performance criteria in a more user-friendly language; the expansion of underpinning knowledge; and assessment methods being rewritten to provide more guidance. A specific improvement mentioned by trainers was the introduction of a Kitchen Porter qualification.

This update, plus the review of the supervisory and management NVQs/SVQs at levels 3 and 4 currently underway, should improve the accessibility of the qualifications to industry.

A quality review of NVQs/SVQs has also recently been launched by NCVQ to ensure consistency in the way the qualifications are delivered and assessed.

A wide range of initiatives are also being carried out to help employers and trainers manage the NVQ/SVQ system, including a move to reduce the administration associated with NVQ/SVQ implementation and assessment; and the development of a workbook to help assessors and verifiers to achieve their TDLB units.

Future of government initiatives

Training Providers have been aware of a lower level of interest in the Training for Work system than previously: and this is twinned with a lower level of funding devoted by TECs/LECs and the government. National trends show a higher demand for Youth Training programmes but lower demand for Training for Work; and with falling unemployment, the future of Training for Work looks uncertain.

Modern Apprenticeships came on board in September 1995 amid an effort to raise training and skill levels of the catering and hospitality industry. Already, they are proving popular with employers. They will assist employers in attracting high quality young people into their business and increase uptake of NVQs/SVQs at levels 2 and 3. Employers with Modern Apprentices will, in partnership with training providers, be responsible for their training and development.

The future of TECs/LECs

Many training providers were unsure of the future for TECs/LECs. This will obviously be fundamental to the operation of training providers. Some training providers mentioned that TECs and LECs could be consolidated into larger regions, which would provide obvious benefits to national training providers.

Change of government

Although the details of any change to the organisation of training brought about by a new government remained unclear; many of the training providers interviewed did feel that training would be given a higher priority under a Labour government.

Relationship between publicly funded training providers and colleges

Relationships between publicly funded training providers and colleges tended to vary markedly: some providers had close links with colleges, and trainees moved between colleges and providers as appropriate. Others had no connection at all with local colleges.

Of the latter, there appeared to be a general feeling of animosity to the colleges for several reasons. Firstly, providers said that the colleges' Realistic Work Environments (RWEs) were not always perceived to be 'realistic' because they were not necessarily open daily, were sometimes over-staffed, and were not under the same pressures as industry.

Secondly, it was felt that colleges were not under such intense pressure as other training providers as far as funding was concerned. Thirdly, training providers were unhappy that students were able to achieve NVQs/SVQs at college (albeit in RWEs) when they were meant to be workplace qualifications. Some training providers felt that there was a discrepancy between NVQs/SVQs offered at college and those offered outside the college set-up; and that the whole system needed streamlining.

Finally, there was competition between training providers and colleges for placements: some training providers were forced to charge employers for trainees whereas colleges were able to 'subsidise' from FEFC funding. Also, college trainees were generally considered higher status trainees than those on government schemes outside the college framework and so were more likely to be placed quickly.

Private/Commercial companies and consultancies

A wide variety of private companies and consultancies encompassing national and local companies, independent consultancies and commercial offshoots of colleges of further and higher education offer training programmes to the catering and hospitality industry.

Typical programmes offered by commercial training providers ranged from health and safety and food hygiene to trainer training, management development and bespoke consultancy work.

Programmes tended to be off-the-job, standardised, and lasted between 1 and 3 days. Most off-the-job training was classroom-based rather than interactive although all trainers interviewed mentioned the importance of the latter (i.e. involving employees in workshops, problem-solving exercises, role play, etc.). The importance of this was attributed to the nature of work in the industry where inter-personal skills are of paramount importance.

Trainers indicated that they had recently experienced an increased demand for training programmes overall, with training and development being more critical to a company's success than ever before. Some trainers considered that there would be lower demand for trainer training programmes in the future - many companies were running such programmes themselves.

Higher demand had been experienced by external trainers to appraise training programmes run by large companies. This wasa role which commercial training providers expected to be adopting more often in the future.

Marketing to industry

All commercial trainers acknowledged that they were operating in a very competitive environment and appeared to be aware of who their competitors were although they rarely had contact with them. Effective marketing of products and services remains

critical under these circumstances. However, many trainers considered active marketing to be unnecessary and word-of-mouth sufficient. A minority of trainers cited branding to be a particular problem.

Some commercial training providers did cold-call prospective clients but more were involved in 'selective calling.' The only other marketing activity mentioned was direct mailing of customers and other prospective clients. Most training providers admitted that there was more that could be done in terms of marketing but it did not seem to be high priority. Few commercial providers concentrated any effort on gaining business from small employers, despite the fact that there are some quarter of a million of them in the industry.

To measure the effectiveness of training programmes, all trainers circulated a short questionnaire at the end of the programme. If feedback was very negative, it was generally followed up. However, these questionnaires did appear to be 'happy charts' as opposed to critical assessments of programmes. Several training providers had a policy of actually phoning the client for feedback but only one said that they directly used the results to tailor or change programmes. Others admitted that there was more that could be done with the information generated from questionnaires.

NVQs/SVQs

Few commercial training companies surveyed based their courses around the attainment of NVQs/SVQs but they did realise their importance in shaping the future of the industry's workforce. Training companies felt that NVQs/SVQs would be a bigger issue when uptake improved at levels 3 and 4 and were currently reluctant to take the qualifications on board.

Investors in People

Although still a relatively new initiative, Investors in People has been received positively by the catering and hospitality industry. It is potentially an initiative for *all* employees since its policies would require staff development for all; and it was perceived as having a shorter time span for implementation than NVQs/SVQs.

Initial reactions from trainers were that Investors in People motivated staff and improved the reputation of businesses. Investors in People appeared to be a more popular initiative than NVQs/SVQs with a number of consultants, basically because the effects were perceived to be more immediate and would inevitably benefit all staff. However the links between Investors in People and NVQs/SVQs need to be highlighted and marketed as complementary initiatives.

Summary

- Publicly funded training providers and colleges were subject to a number of financial constraints. Indeed funding was the overriding issue which placed limitations on the training offered. Colleges need to ensure that they are able to invest in equipment, premises etc., in order to meet the needs of industry as closely as possible. Funding bodies could be approached to ensure that education/training provided is more relevant to industry' needs. Emphasis should also be placed on marketing NVQs/SVQs in housekeeping, reception and portering; and NVQs/SVQs at levels 3 and 4 in all functional areas.
- Publicly funded training providers were put under immense pressure from TECs/LECs to meet increasingly difficult targets. Many quality training providers were being forced out of business as a consequence. These providers need to work together to lobby for the consistent application of government policy between TECs/LECs. They should also request that the system for payment for positive outcomes takes account of the national drop out rates for Youth Training and Training for Work trainees.
- It is also important for these providers to investigate additional funding opportunities for the programmes they offer. Certainly, those providers who could spread the burden of funding over a variety of sources or at least diversify away from TECs/LECs felt they were in a stronger position. Other sources of funding used by training providers were local authorities, charities, and the European Social Fund.
- Colleges and other training providers often had opportunities to work together, and both should be proactive in developing these links. Through mutual co-operation, suppliers of training might work together in promoting to industry the value of education and training, and through sharing business leads which they themselves are unwilling or unable to meet. It is important for training providers to communicate with each other - at least in marketing training generally to the industry.
- Commercial training providers were not subject to the same constraints as other providers. In general, commercial providers could be criticised for being too reactive, content for employers to decide whether the programmes offered suit their needs, and running programmes according to demand. Instead, they must be proactive and respond directly to industry's needs. Training which has been designed with the specific needs of an establishment in mind is far more marketable. Trainers need to bridge the gap between training supply and demand by more effective marketing of programmes, and by focusing training to particular market niches rather than trying to appeal to the whole industry. There are vast opportunities available to providers able to offer programmes appropriate to industry's needs and to market them successfully. The next section aims to help all training providers meet the needs of industry more effectively.

Identifying and bridging training gaps

So far this report has examined both the demand and supply factors influencing the level of training in the hospitality industry. Comparing the two, it is clear that industry itself is not taking the responsibility to train its most important asset seriously and training providers are not currently meeting the needs of the industry adequately or effectively. There is now a need to match the current and future supply of training to the needs of the hospitality industry. This section aims to identify gaps in training provision with industry demand and to provides a summary of action points for providers to operate more efficiently in the future to meet a real industry need.

This study has highlighted the distinct lack of training undertaken in the industry. Nearly half of employers were not providing any training for their staff at all, and many of those that did, provided training only for their permanent and full -time staff. This means that the majority of people in the industry do not receive training. It also begs the question "Does the customer know who is full-time, who is part-time, who is permanent and who is temporary or casual?" . A sobering thought indeed.

Only 23% of employers were using training companies. There is therefore a huge untapped market available for those training providers able to convince employers of the benefits of training *all* staff, including part-time and casual staff who are an increasingly important element of the work force and who can provide programmes and services geared to the real *not* perceived needs of the industry.

Many establishments not training did generally provide induction training, and some had provided training in the past, suggesting that they were not completely averse to the idea of training, but were perhaps restricted in

Identifying and bridging training gaps

the amount of training they were able to provide. Factors mentioned by employers which limited the amount of training undertaken were time, money and, for small businesses, inadequate cover when staff were training away from the work place.

The case studies highlighted the general reluctance of many small employers to train. They indicated that if training was to be successful it would need to be customised, and flexible enough to fit in with the way the business operated. Additionally, the trainer would need to be a trusted person, familiar with the organisation and its local environment with an insight into its day to day running.

Training providers need to respond to these issues by ensuring that programmes offered are:

- relevant to the needs of the business
- conducted at a time and place suitable to the business
- affordable
- aimed at a specific market
- responsive to trends in industry needs
- marketed effectively to the appropriate customers

Specific areas of training needs frequently mentioned by both employers and staff were training in customer care, basic job skills, health and safety, management and computer skills. These must therefore be included in the portfolio of programmes offered by trainers. It is also important to evaluate all programmes offered to ensure that they effectively meet the needs of the target market.

Often a series of short and sharp training sessions (with say a maximum duration of 2 hours per session) were considered to be more effective than one or two day full-time programmes - firstly because trainees are more alert, and secondly because disruption to the business is minimal. Ideally training should be flexible, fitting around peak business hours. Moreover, if trainers visit employers' premises it is likely to be less disruptive to business than taking staff completely away from their workplace.

Since many employers do not have money to invest in training, it is essential that training programmes are applicable to the needs of the business and provide value for money. Training providers could be proactive in developing a pool system to enable employers with similar training requirements to share costs. Alternatively, on undersubscribed programmes, places could be offered at a discount to small employers.

Instead of offering standardised training courses, businesses are likely to find targeted programmes more appropriate. Two markets currently under-exploited by training providers are small businesses without the time or resources to train, and part-time, temporary and casual workers. Training providers could offer training packages reflecting the needs of small businesses who are unable or unwilling to use external training providers. They could also be instrumental in bringing together untrained employees, perhaps from various establishments, and provide training programmes in essential industry skills.

Although it is important that training is offered to a specific market and meets business needs sufficiently, all training providers must be proactive in exploring new market opportunities. For instance, colleges have opportunities to market their programmes to a wider audience than solely school leavers. Colleges have opportunities of offering commercial training programmes to industry. The prevalence of RWEs means that such programmes might appeal to many industry employees. Colleges should ensure that they utilise RWEs as much as possible, introducing programmes in the evening and during vacations.

Commercial providers should note that demand for personalised training programmes which are adapted specifically to meet companies' needs are becoming far more important than standardised programmes. As well as a demand for a comprehensive range of flexible training programmes, there is an increasing call for advice on training provision and staff development on an ongoing basis.

Many employers appear to be unaware that there are relevant training programmes available to them, emphasising the importance of effective marketing and the importance of promoting the benefits derived from training staff.

The benefits of NVQs/SVQs to trainees have been highlighted by training providers, but the take up of NVQs/SVQs by employers has got a long way to go. Only 23% of employers in the survey were either using NVQs/SVQs or planning to in the future. The industry's occupational standards provide national standards of competence which are applicable to employees at all levels and in all sectors of the industry.

Training providers have a task to market NVQs/SVQs more effectively. Trainers could develop programmes to correspond with NVQ/SVQ criteria (i.e., basing programmes around the national standards) and adapt them as necessary to meet the specific requirements of the business. This will then make it easier for businesses to implement the NVQ/SVQ infrastructure in the future if staff are interested in receiving national recognition for the job they already do. Also, few employers are aware of help available for funding NVQ/SVQ implementation from local TECs/LECs and The European Social Fund (ESF) and this could be highlighted by trainers to ensure their involvement.

Trainers should also use their involvement with the Modern Apprentice scheme to widen the uptake of NVQs/SVQs among other employees where apprentices are employed; for example, by acting as assessors or verifiers for the whole establishment and thus helping to kick-start the initiative.

Similarly, Investors in People was only recognised by 26% of respondents but this was an initiative praised by trainers. It therefore needs more effective marketing to the industry.

SUMMARY OF ACTION FOR TRAINING PROVIDERS

- Promote the real benefits of training to employers
- Ensure programmes exactly meet the individual requirements of businesses (length & content)
- Ensure programmes offer value for money
- Keep up with industry needs and trends
- Target programmes at the vast untapped markets of untrained staff
- Be prepared to offer bespoke consultancy services
- Be prepared to develop a consultancy role and customise programmes
- Market available programmes effectively and as widely as possible
- Provide advice to businesses on programmes suitable and funding available
- Be proactive in accessing funding for training programmes
- Broaden links with other training providers and with employers
- Evaluate training programmes in the short and long term to ensure programmes are effective and valued
- Ensure employers are aware of their responsibility to train staff
- Highlight the benefits which can be derived from involvement with NVQs/SVQs, Investors in People and Modern Apprenticeships

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